

# People *in motion*



## **Jarib** Whitehead      **Lindsay** Gaither

**Background:** Last October, Gov. Bob Holden appointed 45 individuals, age 17-22, to the new Governor's Youth Cabinet, created to increase involvement of young Missourians in state and local issues. More than 400 applications were received from every corner of the state. Each Youth Cabinet member works with a state government department. Due to their interest in transportation issues, Gaither and Whitehead were assigned to the Missouri Department of Transportation.

**About Gaither:** Gaither, 21, is from Canton, Mo., and studies business administration and communications at Culver-Stockton College. She is a member of Chi Omega, the Institute of Management Accountants, Disciples on Campus, and serves as the president of Students of Missouri Assisting Rural and Urban Transportation. Gaither also works as a bank teller and coaches girls junior high basketball. She belongs to the Phi Eta Sigma and Lambda Pi Eta honor societies. After graduating this spring, she plans to attend law school.

**How she got interested in transportation:** On March 22, 2000, in her senior year of high school, Gaither's friend and classmate, Kristin Henderson, was killed on Route 61 near the town of Canton.

"We felt part of the reason she was killed was that the road was only two lanes," Gaither says.

When she and her friends found out two more lanes were not scheduled to be added until 2020, they formed SMART and initiated a letter-writing and lobbying campaign. The group intensified its efforts as four more young people lost their lives on Route 61. MoDOT has now been able to fund 10.5 miles of Route 61, including the section where Henderson died, and moved up completion to spring 2004.

**Why she applied to the Youth Cabinet:** "I thought it sounded like a good way to become involved and help youths' voices be heard around the state, and hopefully lead to some changes that could benefit everybody," Gaither says.

**About Whitehead:** Jarib Whitehead, 18, is from St. Louis, Mo., and attends Clayton High School. As a Boy Scout, he has been white-water rafting in Colorado, whale-watching in New England and canoeing in Minnesota, and also has visited Egypt and Ghana. Whitehead has played varsity football and basketball, and is an accomplished musician and actor. He plans to attend college and study marketing.

**How he got interested in transportation:** "I have great interest in the highways in St. Louis," Whitehead says. He's studied the Missouri Department of Transportation's 15-Year Plan and the 6-cent fuel tax, and followed the defeat of Proposition B this summer.

"I think the agency needs to improve its image so we can pass a tax and do something about the roads in St. Louis and elsewhere in the state," he says.

**Why he applied to the Youth Cabinet:** "A lot of people, especially youth, feel they don't have a voice in government, including the state level," Whitehead says. "I thought serving on the cabinet would allow me to contribute and try to make a difference. Plus," he adds, "it looks good on college applications!"

**What they're looking forward to as Youth Cabinet members:** "I'm looking forward to seeing improved highways, especially the 270/70 interchange area," Whitehead says. "I also want to learn more about the state and how MoDOT works." "I was upset about my friend's accident, but what helped me feel better was to gather information and figure out what I can do to change things," Gaither says. "It'll be a weight off my shoulders to know I can help stop accidents like that from happening again."